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The two-day total Twitter immersion: using Twitter for social learning

By Gillian Martin Mehers

Many people do not see the point of Twitter. I know this because I counted myself as a proud member of this large, non-plussed group until a few days ago.

We had followed the hype and set up an account, followed some people (quickly stopped following some people), Tweeted a few times to see how it worked, and then thought, "so what?"

Nobody tweeted back to me, most of my "followers" didn't know me, and it felt a little silly to be sending these cheeps out alone.

Using Twitter in a conference setting however completely changed my mind about its utility and possible applications for learning.

The Online Educa Conference was full of Tweepers. I know that because I spent a lot of time looking at the hashtag that was set up by the conference organizers (smart, they printed it in the front of the Conference Programme Catalogue in "Important Practical Information".)

A hash tag – like #oeb2009 – is a tag that people include in their 140 character Tweets that is searchable on Twitter. If you put the hash tag in the search box on your home page, any post that in-



cludes it will come up in an aggregator window on Twitter. So you can keep track of the whole conversation happening in real time, even if you are not following the individual people Tweeting (yet).

So many useful applications

Believe it or not, a big conference was a great place to be totally immersed in Twitter as it had so many useful applications at the event. Here is what I was noticing about how people were using Twitter for social learning in this setting (remember there were some 2000+ people attending).

At any time, there were up to 10 sessions going on in parallel and obviously you could only attend one, but you could count on the fact that a dozen or so people in each session were Tweeting the main points, and if one of those sessions sounded better than yours, you could always split and go find it. Twitter helped make more purposeful the Law of Two Feet.

Speakers were using Twitter to publicise their sessions in advance (plenty of healthy competition with participants spoiled for choice). They also used Twitter to share their websites and papers. They even used them to announce changes to rooms, speakers line ups, etc.

Being active and thoughtful on Twitter helped people gain visibility in a large conference. In vast plenary halls, no one could really stand out, and very few got to make their points publicly, but on Twitter anyone could jump in with good ideas, and be rewarded with comments and engagement.

Participants were using Twitter to gather people together – for example plenty of Tweets announced snacks and discussion at a certain time at some stand in the Exhibition Hall, or at the bar. As one Tweeter lamented, "Shoot!!!.... i see i missed the



Technology is dramatically changing conference participation. (Photo: David Ausserhofer, ICWE GmbH)

Tweet meetup at the oeb bar yesterday...always good to meet tweeps in RL."

Real-time evaluation

In each session, there were assistants handing out paper feedback forms, but I noticed that not too many people were filling them in. I think they didn't need to, people were giving real feedback to speakers and organizers on Twitter on everything from the quality of the presentations to lunch. One Tweeter wrote, "maybe we need an online course for silently closing the door!" (obviously sitting too close to some conference room exit).

Panel Chairs could use Twitter to gather questions from the audience. At least one Chair monitored Twitter for questions, that she then used to launch discussion when the panelists were done with their formal presentations. One Tweeter even asked his "followers" (not at the conference), "going to mobile learning session-mates of mine, any questions I should ask?"

People were using Twitter to be a part of the larger conversation and interact with many more interesting people. We noticed that we could talk to about 20 people face-to-face in the breaks during the two-day conference. However, we heard from and engaged in conversations with hundreds on Twitter.

Now, after the conference, Twitter acts as an archive of content through Tweets, with their



Technology makes a big conference friendlier for participants (Photo: David Ausserhofer, ICWE GmbH)

links, ideas, and connections to a previously unknown group of like-minded people.

Overall, I was impressed by how much Twitter added to my conference-going experience. It took me a while to get into it. I needed to install Tweetdeck on my I-phone before it got really easy to use it for all the things above. It took me some time to find my "voice", make some personal policies about what, when and how I would engage with the community through Twitter.

And suddenly, I wasn't learning alone anymore.

About the author

Gillian Martin Mehers is director and head of learning at Bright Green Learning @Atadore SARL, in Crans-près-Céligny, Switzerland. She blogs regularly about facilitation and learning at www.welearnsomething.com. She wrote this blog post on December 6, 2009. You can reach her at gillian@mehers.com.

Online Educa Berlin 2009, held Dec. 2-4 in Berlin, Germany, attracted 2078 delegates from 92 countries for the largest global e-learning conference for the corporate, education and public service sectors. More than 400 speakers from 38 countries shared their knowledge and experiences in 85 parallel sessions, as well as forums, workshops, seminars, plenaries and The ONLINE EDUCA Debate.

An extensive exhibition with 104 exhibitors from 20 countries showcased the latest e-learning products and services. The conference site is <http://www.online-educa.com>. You can find Twitter at <http://twitter.com>, and Tweetdeck at <http://www.tweetdeck.com/beta/>.

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Growing together as facilitators – The Swedish facilitators network

By Pia Larsson | Board of Svenska Facilitatörnätverket | IAF certified facilitator



SFN board member Pia Larsson (centre, facing camera) takes part in small group work during a regular SFN meeting. (Photo courtesy SFN)

The Swedish network of facilitators, known as Svenska Facilitatörnätverket or SFN, started in 2007 to replace the former network called EFUGS (European Facilitator User Group Skandinavia) which had been running since the beginning of 1990.

The network is for everybody who works as a facilitator or is interested in facilitation and want to grow together with others in the field of facilitation in Sweden.

We meet regularly four times a year. Each meeting has a theme and the meetings are basically interactive with a minimum of presentation. The members want to learn new insights, methods and techniques and network with others.

The meetings are in Swedish but you don't have to live or work in Sweden to be a member. The only demand we have is that members must be prepared to contribute to the network meetings.

During 2009 we had themes like Appreciative Inquiry, Body language, Insights, and NLP. We are right now planning for next year and the program will include Future search, System theory, Virtual meetings and much more.

As of November, we have an updated website: www.facilitatornatverket.se You will soon see dates for coming network meetings.

The board consists of Mike Holdstock, Karin Klerfeldt, Johan Eklund, Pia Larsson and Chair Maria Eliasson.

SFN is important for me as a board member as it inspires me to learn other ways of working, to be updated on what is new in the field, and to network with colleagues in Sweden.

If you are an IAF member and want to visit us, you are welcome to attend one of our meetings free of charge as a guest. Please contact any of the board members (listed on our website) and we will be happy to register you.

Celebrating ICA:UK's international work



(Photo by ICA:UK)

As well as offering Technology of Participation training year-round throughout the United Kingdom, ICA:UK also works internationally on participation, partnership and conflict transformation with many international NGOs and partners in Africa. That international focus will be celebrated during the organization's annual general meeting in London later this month (January 23).

ICA:UK supports national and local partner organizations in 11 African countries – Benin, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Its vision is to see a growing African culture of participation supported by effective development interventions delivered by sovereign local organizations.

ICA:UK sees local organizations as having the key role in leading and supporting a sustainable development process, with its work being to support African-led initiatives and inform decision-making rather than imposing decisions already made.

An example of the effectiveness of this approach comes from Kassimou Issotina, director of the Lambassa ICA Benin, which recently provided ToP facilitation training for its "village volunteers" program. "Five volunteers are currently involved in our tree-planting campaign with grassroots communities, three others are working on our small project on HIV/AIDS in Ouaké district, and next month a project on land access for women will start which will require at least four persons. We don't worry now when we need to start a project. After this training we noticed that communities' participation in our programmes is increasing, because they understand better what we do."

PEOPLE

Maureen Nandawula, Uganda

Maureen is a District Community Development Officer who also volunteers with ICA Uganda. She has worked in the field for 10 years, and works at the community level to plan and implement programmes, train communities and raise awareness on gender issues and social protection.



What motivates you in your work?

My greatest motivation is when I achieve intended objectives and goals, but more especially when people's lives change because of what I do.

What have you learnt from your experiences?

Communities are dynamic. This dynamism is a great tool for social change if well utilised. When people are involved in their own change process, they are more likely to embrace it and own it. Otherwise they alienate themselves from "your" programme and no change will take place. Community learning \change is a slow process

If people like you weren't working in the villages and communities of Africa, what would happen?

Social workers are change agents. They create awareness and mobilise communities to live better lives. Without this role, many communities will continue to lag behind in development because there will be little or no participation changing their lives, even where resources are available.

PEOPLE

Yawo Gator Adufu, Togo

Yawo has been working in community development since 2001, and now works with ICA Togo, both as Director and as a front line worker.



As part of the recent HIV/AIDS programme, Adufu has been training HIV/AIDS peer educators, as well as linking environmental issues to rural economic activities, and writing proposals to access further funding.

What motivates you in your work?

My main source of motivation is the current state of poverty in rural communities and my belief that we are able to reduce it.

What have you learnt from your experiences?

From my experience, I learnt that development is a long process and it takes times. I found also that poverty is reality and education is the major weapon to combat it. People are telling themselves that they are poor and they believe it. They consider poverty as their destiny. So, before African communities meet development, they need to be educated. The idea of poverty must be removed out of their minds through education.

If people like you weren't working in the villages and communities of Africa, what would happen?

In Togo, if there is no NGO, no people like me, there will be a catastrophe. The state will be worse than the current situation. Thousands of children will not attend schools in remote areas; the status of women will not be improved. We give assistance to people in areas government officials cannot go with their cars, we support people in places where government members do not know.

Case Studies

ICA:UK is documenting its work through case studies that are available online at its website <http://www.ica-uk.org.uk/>. Here is an example of ICA:UK's international program focus, adapted from a longer case study available on the website:

Developing a Culture of Participation with the International Cultural Youth Exchange (ICYE) network

ICYE is an international non-profit youth exchange organisation promoting youth mobility, intercultural learning and international voluntary service. It organizes long and short-term exchanges combining home stays with voluntary service in more than 34 countries around the world.

ICA:UK has been working with ICYE members in Europe and Scandinavia since 2006. We have delivered three five-day training events:

- in July 2006 with ICJA Germany in Berlin, 13 from France, Italy, Germany, Iceland, Finland, Switzerland, Romania and Spain attended training on the ToP Focused Conversation, Consensus Workshop and Action Planning methods
- in April 2007 with AUS Iceland in Reykjavik, 18 from France, Germany, Spain, Hungary, Romania, Finland, UK, Switzerland, Netherlands, Italy, Austria, Portugal & Estonia attended training on the ToP Consensus Workshop method and Participatory Strategic Planning
- in August 2008 with ASERMUN Spain in Badajoz, 15 from France, Germany, UK, Netherlands, Estonia, Spain & Iceland attended training on the ToP Focused Conversation & Action Planning methods and Group Facilitation Skills.

Outputs

Some lessons learnt from these events, extracted from course evaluations, included:

2006 in Berlin

- we have a better idea of what participation is, what different facets it includes, in which

ways it can be improved and how central its role is when working in a team

- now I see participation as something one should train and not anymore as naturally given to everybody

2007 in Reykjavik

- results are more comprehensive, more clearly articulated, and actions are more focused rather than the “hit and miss” method that seems to have occurred when directed by only one person
- participation is the most important thing if you want to find the best solution - difficult - takes much time and patience - but the results are worth it
- the importance (and challenge) of following up

2008 in Badajoz

- the difference between facilitation and training: how can I use facilitation skills within our organisation, how to be empowering participation through facilitation skills and methods
- I understand the concept of participation much better and the different levels of it

- both facilitation and participation needs hard work and focus on the purpose

Impact

Three to six months after each training course, we sent out a questionnaire to assess the longer term changes that resulted from the training. Participants reported that:

2006 in Berlin

- I am less of a “control-freak”, I let things go and more easily accept different ways of doing tasks
- I delegate more and I look at things task by task, which makes it easier for me to involve people at any stage they want to
- I pay more attention on the process of improvements and how things build up and not so much on failures (from failures I extract those aspects that I need to prepare more)
- I “wear different glasses” when looking at relationships I have. I share more of those parts of me that can inspire and push forward the person I am having in my life. It’s like a mind-switch... I enjoy it a lot and I see



Thirteen participants from France, Italy, Germany, Iceland, Finland, Switzerland, Romania and Spain attended the training in Berlin in July 2006. (ICA:UK)

that people around me perceive differently my attitude. They get motivation to do more for them and complain less

- in relation with participants, what I do differently is that I pay attention to the colors I use for materials, for my clothes and the smell in the air. It boosts so much their attention even when the program is tiring
- in terms of projects, they are more likely to happen when the people in charge feel totally responsible for the results. Thus the management capacity of my team grows with each project that we do
- I have seen a great difference. These skills really gave me more confidence and I know that these skills really work and I know how to use them
- we now try to listen more to what other people have to say and feel more comfortable making decisions within a team. People feel somehow more motivated because they see themselves as an active part
- I am more patient, I create now more space, where the participants can reflect on the topic and I'm getting used to paraphrase the content which is expressed by a participant, this improve a reflection on the side of the participant, it's also good for a better understanding and it provokes more discussions

2007 in Reykjavik

- work seems more relaxed for people working with me, because I am more relaxed when I know that we share the responsibility
- ideas based on dreams and unrealistic are likely to stay on the paper. Consequence of that: disappointment, lose of motivation
- relationships are more intense, since this method allows interaction on different levels, not necessarily linear. It empowers trust and openness towards cooperation and that is special in my opinion
- in terms of ownership of the project, it belongs 100% to those who did it and they are convinced about it also, that's what I like the most. I have seen people who had a great sense of ownership of that project that even when they discovered it wasn't realistic, they transformed it till it was implemented. Which tells me that using this method stimulates motivation that lasts longer than what I was used to before
- I believe more in the groups I facilitate and in their capacity to achieve the best result they can and therefore will realistically use and put into practice
- I see that participation develops trust and ownership and that the groups feel more respected while becoming more active and re-



Fifteen participants from France, Germany, UK, Netherlands, Estonia, Spain and Iceland attended ICYE training in Badajoz, Spain, in August 2008. (ICA:UK)

sponsible

- I try to involve more people in planning as well as in implementing programs and activities and the results are visible
- my skills as facilitator improved, not only in the field of planning but in general. I feel that now I can not only ask the good question but that I really look for the answer the other can give and not the one I would like. I see this helps people to be more realistic and to better find solutions to the questions they discuss with me. I feel this makes them comfortable and builds trust
- the persons I work with feel more involved and listened to and this create self responsibility and energy.

Developing a Culture of Participation and Promoting Partnership with Sight Savers International

ICA:UK started working with Sight Savers International (SSI) in 1999, and over the first twelve months, provided facilitation services for SSI and two of its partners in Belize and Pakistan. These events introduced a new, more participatory way of working to SSI and had sufficient impact that ICA:UK was asked to facilitate a series of events in the SSI West African region from 2002-2003, and the SSI partner in Belize invited ICA:UK back in 2004 to facilitate their new 5-year plan.

WEST AFRICA REGION

Process

- During the period 2002-2005, ICA:UK:
- facilitated Country Reviews in Sierra Leone, Cameroon and The Gambia;
- developed a Facilitators Manual as a guide for future reviews; and
- held two ten-day training courses (in 2003 and 2005) for 49 members of staff from SSI and its partners in Facilitation Methods and Skills.

Outputs

As a result of these events:

- SSI and stakeholder staff became aware of more participatory ways of working;
- stakeholders were involved in Country Review meetings and saw their input included



ICA:UK worked with Sight Savers International in West Africa 2002-2003 (ICA:UK)

in SSI's new 3-5 year plans;

- SSI have a manual for use in guiding facilitators through a Country Review and other planning processes;
- SSI West Africa has a pool of trained staff members who are being called upon to facilitate a wide range of events for SSI and its stakeholders, both in the West African region and outside.

Impacts

A review session in 2004 enabled the SSI staff to bring out the key differences that the introduction of facilitation methods and skills had brought. These included a clearer idea of key issues leading to:

- more informed projects/programmes
- proposals more grounded in reality
- improved relationships with partners
- more openness, and
- wider ownership of outcomes.

In addition, ICA:UK has not been asked to facilitate any event in the West Africa region since the second training in March 2005, thus indicating that the core group of facilitators is active and effective; and the results in West Africa have led to increased interest from other SSI regions.

Participants' comments on the training included:

- "It has been a wonderful learning and pleasant experience. The eventfulness of the training removed virtually all stress that adult learning could have generated"
- "Congratulations to the facilitators for an interesting and lively training. I was hooked to the proceedings from beginning to end"

An invitation to the Summer Institute

Based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the ALIA Institute brings together systems-oriented tools and perspectives with the values and practices of authentic leadership, creating a unique and powerful support for leaders navigating through times of constraint and complexity.

The ALIA Institute, an independent non-profit organization which began in 2001 as the week-long Shambhala Summer Institute, is offering ALIA Europe in the Netherlands, January 10-16, 2010. If you missed that event, then you will have another chance to participate in discussions with many of the key speakers during ALIA's Annual Summer Institute in Canada in June.

Thanks to Cara Lynn Garvock, who



The Summer Leadership Institute (Photo: ALIA)

handles communications for the ALIA Institute, for this information about the summer program. The picture comes from the ALIA website.

Annual Summer Institute | June 6-12, 2010 | Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

The five-day leadership program takes you into the "innovation zone" — the zone between too much open-ended process and too much command-and-control; the zone of creativity, collaboration, and accountability in environments of complexity.

Learn with masters, boost your authentic leadership presence and skills, and leave with your own maps and methods for shifting your workplace culture or multi-stakeholder project into a more engaged and productive zone.

This program includes in-depth skill-building tracks led by the founders of emerging new leadership fields. Faculty include:

- Glenda Eoyang
(scientific advisor, Plexus Institute)
- Adam Kahane
(author, *Solving Tough Problems*)
- Art Kleiner
(editor in chief, *strategy+business* magazine)
- Barry Oshry (author, *Power and Systems*)
- Wendy Palmer (author, *The Intuitive Body*)
- C. Otto Scharmer (author, *Theory U*)
- Bill Torbert (author, *Action Inquiry*), and

- Margaret Wheatley (author, *Leadership and the New Science*).
- The program also includes mindfulness, creative process, and plenary keynotes and dialogues.

Past participants have said:

"Profound and enriching. This program inspired growth and action at the individual, organizational, and societal levels." — Joyce Steinke, New Brunswick Power, Canada

"To describe my experience as transformative would be an understatement: I feel revolutionized." — Hope J. Lafferty, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York, USA

"An opportunity to learn and reflect amidst an extraordinary group of people." Grahame Broadbelt, Director, Common Purpose, UK

For more details, see <http://www.aliainstitute.org/programs/2010summer/index.html> or watch the video about the Summer Institute at <http://tiny.cc/dNN1V>. There is a discount for registering before March 2nd, and team and non-profit discounts are also available.

IAF Europe – Professional Development 2010

By Gary Purser | Professional Development and Conferences

Following a recent meeting of the IAF Europe Team, we are starting to plan the Professional Development opportunities for IAF Members in 2010.

We are planning to hold the following type of events:

- An annual conference like at Oxford this year for around 150 – 200 people. At this time, we have two countries interested in hosting the conference – Finland and Germany.
- A series of smaller events across the region – possibly Chapter or local network led.
- An IAF Europe Tour taking a programme featuring top facilitators to share experiences and learning across the region.
- A CPF development programme to expand the reach of this qualification across our region.
- We are negotiating to engage the services of a professional organisation to provide administrative, membership and financial services to us and they will provide this



*At the IAF Europe 2009 conference
(Photo: Karen Mead, Entendu)*

support in helping you if you wish to run any of the above events.

If you are interested in hosting the conference, running an event in your region, CPF qualification, etc. please get in touch with me at gary.purser@iaf-europe.eu. I will be only too pleased to discuss this with you.

Introducing Kristin Reinbach

IAF Europe team member responsible for Chapters and Membership Growth

Only last year did I get to know the IAF, directly settled for a membership, and visited the inspiring conference at Oxford. Returning from it, my intention was clear: if any opportunity arose to actively take part in its development, I would love to contribute!

Last month, I was appointed to the European team. I am thankful for the trust placed in me, and look forward to the challenge of contributing to the development of chapters and membership growth. Not to forget the teamwork with Pamela, Rosemary and Gary!

Besides my focus on chapter development and membership growth, I will gladly pitch in to help



*Our newest IAF Europe team member
(Photo courtesy Kristin Reinbach)*



in other areas as well, such as marketing, communication and sponsorship.

I would like to use this introduction to give you a first impression of my perspective and motivations concerning my new role.

I love the idea of getting the message of facilitating across to the European world by extending our member base. To extend the role and the image of facilitating in Europe will definitely be able to promote new ways of change. Especially in my perspective of professionally supporting mostly corporate managers, I hope that this change will help promote a new understanding of leadership and innovation processes as well.

Managing growth and change

For some reason, already as an intern I was and still am today the person for growth and change situations. Though I am naturally drawn to experiencing and creating new things, I also needed to develop helpful skills to make these situations easier.

Project management skills came in handy when managing huge multi-projects including 10 bigger and even a larger number of smaller projects. Today, I make use of a whole lot of experience about how to set up new teams and processes. After all, it feels great to see an idea turn into reality.

My link to facilitation is rooted in finding suitable measures and instruments to help my clients to achieve sustainable results. I believe in the power of an "affirmative" attitude which is also the reason I integrated this also in the modules of my "krysalis mix"

Currently, I work a lot with CPS - Creative Problem Solving. In Germany, facilitation and CPS even more, are really new things. My ambition is to bring these new instruments to the decision makers in order to make their complex jobs a bit easier

Get in touch!

Quite frankly, I loathe the so-called standard- "networking" based on some contact list, aimless coffee drinking and foggy assumptions about giving-and-taking. I look forward to helping to establish a network that is based on clear giving-and-taking as well as content, competence and inspiring relationships.

I know that there are many members out there in "IAF Europe" with great ideas and abilities I do not know yet. I would love to change that as soon as possible, by inviting you to skype with me ("kristin.l.reinbach").

Let's have a talk about what you would wish for and/or tell me what you would like to contribute to our chapter development and membership growth.

I look forward to meeting you – just get started and support us to make IAF Europe grow for you!





Photo courtesy of Kristin Reinbach

Some Basics

- Kristin Lara Reinbach, 37, born in Heidelberg (Germany), grown up and educated at Mannheim and Mannheim University.
- While studying, spent time abroad in Spain - Santiago de Compostela, Salamanca, France - Bretagne, USA - Maryland. After formal education, spent some professional time in Wiesbaden and travelled a lot in Germany.
- Quite down-to-earth (still loving her home county - the "Kurpfalz") and also a real European, she loves travel, reading whenever wherever whatever, always up to get to know new things and people.
- Loves: sports (yoga, running, swimming, surfing, skiing); the sea and the mountains; good food; challenging projects and visible results.

Her baby: krysalis consult

- In 2005, she established "krysalis consult" (www.krysalis-consult.de) specializing in a growth enhancing mix of consulting, facilitating, action learning and coaching.
- Her vision is to create an outstanding company that supports mostly European clients to pragmatically and sustainably reach their business objectives and that will be based on a franchise/licensing style partnering structure.

Professional Background

- While still in university, gained much experience in many areas - product management with the major Dutch consumer goods company, Campina Melkunie; sports and events sponsorship (organizing the Steffi-Graf-tournament at Leipzig, for example); working for Sheraton Hotels in the USA, and as an au pair in France and Cairo, doing language courses in Spain, etc..
- Gained much knowledge during 10+ intense years of more-than-full-time work, mostly as a management consultant: at Marketing Partner (Wiesbaden), managing projects, marketing director for a new-economy start-up in Heidelberg, developing a consultants team at UGW in Wiesbaden as well as (successfully) doing new business there, establishing a consultancy practice for iMi (Wiesbaden, a spin-off of Marketing Partner).
- Has worked a lot in fast-moving consumer goods, automotive and energy branches, mostly in marketing/sales/business development/strategy as well as typical issues such as promoting better communication, improving project management, establishing sales or marketing strategies, developing new product ideas, etc.

Educational Background

- In 1998 Diploma at the University of Mannheim (majors: business administration and English language and literature studies, minors: history, sociology, politics, media and communications). Focus on USA and on marketing.
- In 2007: Master of Science (Management) at the "Fernuniversität Hagen" - focus: Human Capital Management.
- A certified Vinyasa Power Yoga Master Trainer (IFAA) - and just now completing the RYT (Registered Yoga Teacher) certification of the American Yoga Alliance.

Acting locally, thinking globally: Our 2010 European team agenda

By Pamela Lupton Bowers | Regional Representative, IAF Europe

The new European Board met Dec. 18-20 in Geneva for a kick-off meeting intended to welcome me as the new European regional representative (and chair of our European team) and Kristin Reinbach as new team member for Chapter Development. We had decided to meet in a chalet in the surrounding mountains but in the end decided it would be more efficient to stay in Geneva.

However, we could not avoid the snow. The first of the winter storms decided to visit that very day and travel across Europe was affected. Rosemary and Kristin managed to arrive albeit a little late, but unfortunately Gary's Friday flight from Luton was cancelled. He heroically set off again at 04:00 am Saturday morning for Luton, only to have both flights Saturday cancelled.

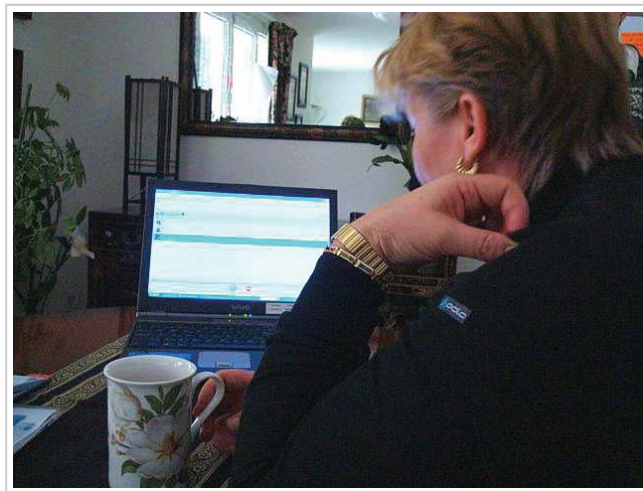
Thank goodness for Skype – most of the time! We managed to overcome a multitude of challenges to plough through the original agenda, and we admired Gary's determination to be with us for most of the weekend and appreciated his contributions. The other challenge to be sorted was Rosemary's luggage. While she sprinted through the airport at Zurich to make the connection to Geneva, her suitcase did not arrive until lunch time the following day.

One of our goals was team bonding, so early Saturday morning, Kristin, Rosemary and I took a long walk along the lake and up into the surrounding vineyards. It was a great occasion to begin getting to know one another.

Our Team in 2010

As the team was staying at my home, we had a very informal breakfast and began to tackle the day's topics. We sat 'Gary' on the table and proceeded to outline our working relationships and team culture. The walls and windows were soon filled with the ubiquitous coloured post-its.

We continued our 'bonding' that evening over dinner in a very typical Swiss chalet restaurant where we enjoyed fondue and local wines.



Gary Purser, in charge of conferences and professional development, took part in the meeting by Skype.

Our conversations led us to conclude that in 2010, our team wants to be:

- Solution and Results focused
- Realistic about work load and time frames
- Sensitive to one another
- Continuing to clarify and simplify organisational structures in Europe

The snow also interfered with our planned Saturday afternoon session on Chapter development with members of the Geneva Facilitator Network. However, Swiss trains seem to make it through anything, and so Christine Zeigler arrived from Basel, and Gillian Martin Mehers joined the discussion by Skype. We are grateful to both for their valuable contributions.

A mutually beneficial relationship

We had a really fruitful brainstorm discussion on the broad focus question of "What are all the issues to be addressed in determining an appropriate mutually beneficial relationship between IAF Global and the local networks?" The ideas fell into two groups.

The first included problems to be addressed, issues to be raised and questions to be answered. Not least is what will be the future of existing

networks and how can we support newly developing networks into the new Chapter model proposed by the IAF Global Board.

As an example, I shared an overview of the activities currently on going in Geneva – bi-monthly meetings, one and two day workshop events in topics such as Reviewing, Story Telling, and ToP, as well as the challenges including financing regular meetings when turnout is too low to cover the cost of room hire and related expenses.

We decided we wanted:

- Networks open to all interested people and not just practicing facilitators – this questions whether all ‘members’ would want to be members of IAF
- Simple and high quality events offering up-to-date knowledge, possibly involving paid speakers
- Professional support in the sense of networking, building relationships, and getting visibility to potential clients and vice versa
- Personal Development workshops to increase skills and IAF facilitator competencies – access to facilitators from outside the country/region
- Opportunities to exchange ideas
- Broader and better communication of events etc
- More/easier access to CPF assessment which would result in more members and more participation in local groups

The benefits to IAF globally, as well as in Europe, would include more visibility and more members, promoting CPF, increased use of facilitation, and promotion of the broader IAF event calendar.

“Mini-conferences” model

We discussed the idea of a pilot series of one day events – mini conferences without all the frills of the annual conferences, at both local and regional levels. We imagined the model to be a one day event of around 4-6 workshops which could be offered morning and afternoon allowing people to sign up for two workshops in the day.

Local events would be organised and supported by the local talent in the network, allowing for peer support and increased



We emailed the pictures of our flip charts to Gary, so he could participate virtually.

visibility for facilitators to potential clients and collaborators. The regional ones would include support from facilitators across the region and even globally and might evolve into a ‘European Tour’.

Kristin is creating a concept paper as part of her initial ideas for promoting and developing chapters and will collaborate with Gary to elaborate the one day ‘tour’ idea. We want to involve interested people across the region in these projects and will be reaching out to those of you who have already expressed an interest in being involved.

One of our priority goals is to help our colleagues in countries where there is not a great tradition or network of facilitators. We have many motivated facilitators across the eastern countries of Europe who are keen to develop their networks and their profession. We hope to find people willing to share their time and expertise to help them in their quest. We even discussed the idea of twinning more developed networks with those emerging ones. If your networks are interested in such an idea, contact Kristin, Gary, or Rosemary.

Accelerated CPF process

The other related topic we tackled during our weekend is the challenge of establishing a CPF (Certified Professional Facilitator) process in countries with emerging chapters and especially where English is not the working language. Our team began thinking about this idea as a result of our excellent meeting with the Serbian Facilitator Network in Belgrade in November.

Work is happening at the Global level and our European team has made some suggestions about how we envisage accelerating the process in order to establish CPFs capable of assessing other CPF's in country. Our ideas are still at the early stage. Issues to be addressed include:

Currently there are no Assessors who speak many of the local languages where facilitators are operating

Cost of the existing process is beyond the means of most people in the 'newer' European economies, specifically Eastern Europe

Supporting documentation and materials need to be translated into local languages

We hope to accelerate this process so we can have facilitators certified in selected countries by the end of 2010. Stay tuned to the newsletter to learn how we ultimately plan on implementing our process.

All in all we were pleased with our meeting and despite all the logistical challenges, we managed to complete our agenda and all felt a great sense of excitement and achievement on Sunday afternoon. We intend to meet our goals and hope we can rely on your support to help encourage and nurture local facilitator networks and IAF chapters across the region.



Pamela and Kristin chat with Christine Zeigler of Basel, a member of the Geneva Facilitators Network.

Community Outreach Award nominations due by Feb. 1

By Mary Sue McCarthy, IAF Board Member, and Chair, Community Outreach Initiative

Why is the award being given?

After several years of planning, the International Association of Facilitators (IAF) is initiating the Community Outreach Award in order to:

- recognize, honor and celebrate the ongoing outreach efforts of IAF facilitators
- embody a core IAF value of supporting socially responsible change
- demonstrate the spirit of service implied in the role of a facilitator
- showcase the significant difference that masterful facilitation can make in community life
- encourage IAF members to participate in a wide variety of community service roles

Who receives the award?

The Community Outreach Award is presented annually to IAF members who have demonstrated excellence in a volunteer service project. Eligible candidates are any group of facilitators that include at least one person who has been an IAF member for a year before the nomination.

Specific criteria include the following:

- The community service involved a group of facilitators who participated without intent for personal profit or gain
- The community service responded to a societal need or issue in a setting that lacked the resources to hire high-quality assistance for decision-making, planning or change making or situation
- The community service enabled participants of a community solve problems, identify directions and (or) accelerate their self-organizing capacity with the help of participative methods and facilitation
- The community service resulted in positive, ongoing and recognized community change or improvement
- The community service demonstrated the best practices and values of the profession through active demonstration

When will the award be presented?

The award will be presented at the first IAF Conference scheduled after March each year. In

2010, this is the IAF NA Conference in Chicago, IL U.S.A., April 20-25, 2010. The recipients will also be honored on the IAF website and all other global conferences in the same year through articles and audio-visual presentations that highlight the honorees and their service.

How are award recipients selected?

An Outreach Award Selection Committee will be asked to serve on behalf of the worldwide membership to review the nominations and select the recipients of the Community Outreach Award. Members of the six-member committee will be composed of people who have served in past IAF leadership roles and represent at least three IAF regions including:

- 1 former officer of the IAF Board of Directors
- 2 former IAF Conference Chairs
- 2 former regional representatives
- 1 Certified Professional Facilitator Assessor

How can you nominate award candidates?

Anyone who has been an IAF member for a year can nominate candidates by submitting six copies of the following packet of information to the IAF office:

- Names of the nominees, the main contact for the group and the person doing the nominating
- A 1-2 page narrative description of the project, facilitators and how their work meets the award criteria
- Three supporting letters from members of the affected community that can attest to the impact of the project and the facilitators' contribution at least 6 months after the initial event
- Additional collateral materials including background information on each facilitator and any available photos, articles, videos, and other information describing the service project

Please submit your entry electronically by February 1, 2010, to IAF GLOBAL OUTREACH AWARD COMPETITION at office@iaf-world.org. For questions, please email marysue@statusgrow.com, and include IAF Award in subject line.

Registration now open for IAFNA 2010 Conference

April 20-23, 2010 | Hyatt Regency McCormick Place, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Act now if you want to take advantage of the Early Bird registration discount for the IAFNA 2010 conference – regular pricing begins Jan. 7, 2010. Registration is available at www.iafna2010.com.

Conference Chair Jan Means sent us this invitation to the conference:

Come join us in the great city of Chicago as it hosts its first IAF Conference! We have chosen Chicago—“the USA’s City of the Year” (according to Fast Company) - as the host city for our 16th North America Conference. Our expectation is that 500 professional facilitators and delegates from other related fields will take advantage of the opportunity to “Collaborate” in this award winning city.

This very special urban environment is sure to inspire a positive environment in which to explore the impact and benefits of facilitation on business, government and community. Delegates share a passion for facilitation and participatory practice in pursuit of better communication, understanding, collaboration and harmony in work places, organizations and communities. What better setting to pursue these goals than a cosmopolitan city with an unmatched outdoor landscape.

Our 2010 conference theme is “Collaboration in Action”. Our intent is to demonstrate facilitation skills and offer a variety of learning experiences that will truly engage our conference attendees. From the opening moments and



The city of Chicago (courtesy IAFNA website)

throughout all the conference sessions and activities, delegates will be immersed in facilitation and exposed to its various approaches and styles. Along with many well-known presenters from the field of facilitation and collaboration, some unique offerings and new learning experiences will be offered for the first time at our IAF North America 2010 Conference.

For the first time in our conference history, a new approach to learning will be available through our three "Facilitation in Action" half-day offerings, which will allow attendees to learn by observing one of our expert facilitators in a live facilitated session, and interact at specified points in the session with both the facilitator and the participants.

Certain to be a highlight of our conference will be our keynote speaker - Margaret Wheatley. Margaret is a renowned author and speaker, and co-founder of the Berkana Institute, a charitable global foundation that works in partnership with a rich diversity of people around the world who strengthen their communities by working with the wisdom and wealth already present in their people, traditions and environment. She is a dynamic presence, and her message promises to be an exciting addition to our conference program.

The Art & Mastery of Facilitation



IAF North America Conference Week April 20-23

For member registration, please go to www.iafna2010.com, and click on the Program link to see the IAFNA 2010 Conference program offerings. One-day and Two-day trainings will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 20-21, 2010. Our short-workshops will be held during the main conference days of Thursday and Friday, April 22-23, 2010. Once you review which conference offerings and sessions you

want to attend, go to the Register link to start your registration. Your special IAF membership pricing for the conference is accessible by keying in the following access code when requested during registration: mem2010. Questions? Contact Registration Coordinator, Bryanna Thiel, of the Advance Group at iafnareg@advance-group.com.

Welcome, new and returning members

(December 2009)

We are delighted to welcome new members who joined IAF in December:

- Margit Liebhart, UK
- Paul Manders, Netherlands

We are equally delighted to welcome back the following members who renewed their memberships during December:

- Arnolds Bruders, Latvia
- Paul Cummings, UK

- Bojan Djuric, Serbia
- Fred Frowin Fajtak, Austria
- Christine Houlton, UK
- James Newkirk, Serbia
- Joseph Park, UK
- Ben Richardson, UK
- Ruth van den Heuvel, Netherlands
- Maarten H.F. van Rijn, Netherlands
- Teun van Wijk, Netherlands

Workshops and Meetings

Find out more details about specific events listed here by visiting the Workshops and Meetings section of the IAF Europe Forum (<http://www.iaf-europe.eu>) If you would like to let others know about an event you are organizing, please email rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu.

JANUARY 2010

- Participatory Strategic Planning, Jan. 6-7, Gateshead, UK (ICA:UK)
- ALIA (Authentic Leadership in Action) Europe, Jan. 10-16, Mennerode Conference Centre, Elspeet, Netherlands
- Facilitation Skills Programme, Winter 2010, Glasgow, Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation.

Jan. 19-20; Feb. 16-17; and Mar. 23-24.

(Christine Partridge)

- Introduction To Group Facilitation, Jan. 20, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- ICA:UK annual general meeting and International Programme showcase event, Jan. 23, London UK (ICA:UK)

FEBRUARY 2010

- Fast-track Facilitation Skills Workshop, Feb. 9, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, UK (facilitate this!)
- Facilitation Fundamentals, Feb. 9-10, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, UK (facilitate this!)

- Group Facilitation Methods, Feb. 10-11, London UK (ICA:UK)
- CPF Certification Event (in Dutch), Feb. 11, Rossum, The Netherlands
- Using Strength-based Approaches to Personal and Organisational Change: The Theory and Practice of Appreciative Inquiry, Feb. 22-23, and March 3, 12, and 26, London, UK (Anne Radford and Malcolm Westwood)
- Group Facilitation Methods, Feb. 23-24, Belfast, Northern Ireland (ICA:UK)
- Methods for Strategic Collaboration – Training Workshop, Feb. 25-March 1, North Wales. (Christine Whitney Sanchez and Clodhna Mulhern)

MARCH 2010

- UK AI Network meeting, March 8, London, UK
- Advanced Facilitation Skills, Mar. 9-10, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire, UK (facilitate this!)
- Facilitating Conflict, March 16-17, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)
- Open Space Technology training (en Francais), March 24-26, Brussels, Belgium (Diane Gibeault)
- Group Facilitation Methods, March 24-25, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)
- Action Planning, March 26, Manchester UK (ICA:UK)

APRIL 2010

- 9th European AI Network meeting, April 9-10, Bled, Slovenia
- Group Facilitation Methods, Apr. 13-14, London UK (ICA:UK)
- Facilitation Skills Program, Spring 2010, Glasgow, Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation, April 13-14; May 18-19; and June 2-3. (Christine Partridge)
- Making Meetings More Effective, April 21-22, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)

MAY 2010

- Maximizing Participation – How to Hold Large Scale Interventions, May 13, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)
- The Facilitative Trainer, May 26-27, Glasgow (Kinharvie Institute of Facilitation)
- Resilient Cities 2010 Congress, May 28-30, Bonn, Germany



ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The IAF Europe Newsletter is published monthly by the IAF Europe Regional Team for members of the International Association of Facilitators living within Europe.

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Cover picture:

This picture of Gillian Martin Mehers at the Online Educa Conference in Berlin was a serendipitous discovery as we were scouting for pictures to illustrate Gillian's article – she didn't realize it had been taken. The photograph, taken by David Ausserhofer, is used with permission of ICWE GmbH, the copyright holder.

Please send your contributions to your Newsletter to rosemary.cairns@iaf-europe.eu